MEETING DATE: Type of Agenda Item: Sierra County ⊠Regular □Timed June 29, 2022 **Board of Supervisors'** Consent **DEPARTMENT:** Board of Supervisors Agenda Transmittal & APPROVING PARTY: Paul Roen, Chair, District No. 3 **Record of Proceedings PHONE NUMBER:** 530-289-3295 AGENDA ITEM: Report on meeting held June 22, 2022 with the Acting Tahoe National Forest Supervisor Matt Jedra to address a number of issues of concern previously identified by the Board of Supervisors, and possible action/direction to staff. See attached letter from the Board to Acting Forest Supervisor Matt Jedra **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** On **FUNDING SOURCE: GENERAL FUND IMPACT:** No General Fund Impact OTHER FUND: AMOUNT: \$ N/A ARE ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL REQUIRED? IS THIS ITEM ALLOCATED IN THE BUDGET? Yes No □Yes, -- --IS A BUDGET TRANSFER REQUIRED? Yes No ∏No SPACE BELOW FOR CLERK'S USE **BOARD ACTION:** Resolution 2022-☐ Set public hearing □Approved Agreement 2022- _____ For: ☐ Approved as amended Ordinance ____ ☐ Direction to: _____ \square Adopted Vote: ☐ Referred to: _____ ☐ Adopted as amended Ayes: ☐ Continued to: ☐ Denied Noes: \square Authorization given to: Other Abstain: ☐ No Action Taken Absent: ☐ By Consensus **COMMENTS:**

DATE

CLERK TO THE BOARD

SIERRA COUNTY

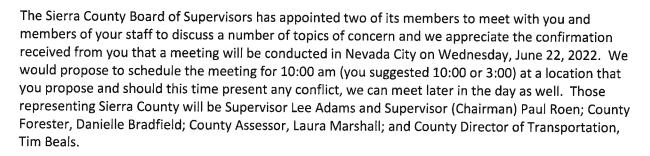
Board of Supervisors P.O. Drawer D Downieville, California 95936 Telephone (530) 289-3295 Fax (530) 289-2830

June 9, 2022

United States Forest Service Forest Supervisors Office 631 Coyote Street Nevada City, California 95959

Attn: Mr. Matt Jedra

Acting Forest Supervisor



The County would propose to discuss the following items and please feel free to include any matters of interest or concern to the Forest Service as additional discussion topics:

- 1) Forest Treatment Projects for Wildfire Prevention Prioritizing Community areas
- 2) Yuba River Ranger District waste disposal practices
- 3) County access to Federal mining claim information required for County waste disposal fees
- 4) Campground closures (Ramshorn, Snag, Sierra, Chapman, Yuba Pass, etc)
- 5) Status of current Yuba River Ranger District Offices and existing Downieville Ranger Station
- 6) County fire coverage for the 22 summer-fall season-Sierraville and Downieville
- 7) Establishing regular coordination between the Forest Service and the County

Regarding the first of the proposed discussion topics, we note that a "strategy meeting" was conducted on April 28 to "dial in acres and funding from CFLRP and BIL for FY22 and beyond". Funding made available for qualified treatment projects and other qualified projects included \$3 million from CFLRP and \$6.8 million from BIL. In an email dated May 2, 2022, Mr. Dave Fournier, Natural Resources Staff Officer for the Tahoe National Forest identified that work continues to provide a funding strategy on the North Yuba forest landscape and he inquired of Sierra County the following:

- 1) If the County could take on one of the identified projects or provide support.
- 2) If it would be feasible to set up a "good neighbor authority" with the County in out-years.
- 3) If BIL funds need to go into new agreements of if existing agreements could be modified.



A number of projects were identified and discussed in the previous strategy meetings and many projects were in the more extreme southern and western fringe of the County-far from community areas. While project constraints are understood and some projects may be ready for implementation, the existence of exemption processes for CEQA and NEPA suggest opportunities to generate effective projects in a relatively short period of time assuming that priority is assigned and goals are clear to deliver projects. Such projects should, and need to be, focused on the wildfire exposure, fuel loading conditions, and protection within and adjacent to the existing communities in the North Yuba watershed.

The County identifies projects that should be seriously considered that will direct protection to the existing communities and we need the leadership, partnership, funding, and priority to implement such a strategy. Such projects as Greene Acres; Galloway; Forest City National Register Historic Living Community; coordination with Caltrans efforts to provide sufficient right of way clearances along State Highways; providing funds for contract right of way clearing projects along existing County Highways that pass through National Forest System Lands; fuel break construction that uses existing roads that surround the various communities (please see attached map as just one example showing a proposed firebreak strategy for Downieville using existing roads that are overgrown and require right of way clearing and that meet exemption criteria); use of the existing and approved "Master Stewardship Agreement" in place between the County and Tahoe National Forest which grants wide discretion and effective alternatives to traditional processing of projects and also affords a unique method of implementation for projects that the Forest Service could otherwise not implement; implementation of the Yuba Project; and if feasible, strengthening the fire prevention and suppression capabilities of local fire agencies and the Forest Service.

The message is loud and clear, we (collectively) need to do significantly more than has occurred in the past. Studying, analyzing, evaluating, scoping, testing, and such are all words that spell delay and paralysis in the implementation of necessary landscape-based fire fuel reduction projects and we need to use the criteria for exemption, declare emergency conditions, and propose projects that will be attainable. In the public eye, we need to deliver sound and effective projects and this will only occur if we think outside of the box, afford strong advocacy and leadership, and be willing to take a strong stand in the face of potentially losing this premiere watershed to a catastrophic wildfire.

Thank you and we look forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,

Sierra County

Board of Supervisors

Paul Roen

Chairman of the Board

CC: Clerk of the Board

Board of Supervisors

County Forester County Assessor

County Director of Transportation

